



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers** ®  
San Francisco District

**Project Map**

**LAKE MENDOCINO/COYOTE DAM**  
CALIFORNIA

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 1<sup>st</sup> District, Rep. Mike Thompson

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Coyote Dam (also known as Coyote Valley Dam) project was authorized by the Flood Control Act of 1944 and was completed in 1958 for purposes of flood control, water supply, recreation and stream flow regulation. The six million cubic yard dam is compacted earth fill with an impervious core and measures 160 feet high and 3,500 feet long. Lake Mendocino, located on the East Fork of the Russian River, has a storage capacity of 122,500 acre-feet and has a total surface area of 1,822 acres. The lake has an ungated spillway, designed for a maximum release of 35,800 cubic feet per second. Major facilities include an anadromous fish egg collection facility, visitor center complex, park headquarters, hydropower plant, developed campground (300 sites), 18 primitive boat-in/hike-in campsites, a trail system, marina, two boat launch ramps, swim beach, and picnic areas. Six hundred and eighty nine acres of the park's 5,110 acres are devoted to wildlife management.

FISCAL YEAR 03 BUDGET: \$3,334,000

PRESENT STATUS: The Lake Mendocino/Coyote Dam Project was designed to create a multipurpose reservoir for the residents of Mendocino and Sonoma Counties. Benefits of the project include virtual elimination of flooding of the East Fork of the Russian River downstream of the dam and a reduction in frequency and flooding of the main-stem Russian River. Lake Mendocino provides recreation opportunities for over 1,000,200 visitors per year with over 30 percent of all recreation use by boaters. Outdoor recreation opportunities include camping, boating, hunting, fishing, and hiking.

During FY2000 over \$310,000 was collected in recreation fees. The anadromous fish egg collection facility is operated under a cooperative agreement with the California State Department of Fish and Game, with all operation and maintenance costs reimbursed by the Corps.

Many of the Lake's recreational facilities are more than 35 years old. It is imperative that the facilities be upgraded before system failures occur. However, the President's FY 2002 budget was insufficient to allow for the updating of these facilities.

FUTURE EFFORTS: Future priorities include replacement of seriously eroded riprap on the upstream face of the dam. Restrooms and sewer lines need replacement or major upgrades. The Bushay Campground is in need of major upgrading and replacement of facilities. This campground has been selected by Corps Headquarters to be one of 17 projects to be modernized. However, Congress did not fund this plan and it is not known when or if Congress will do so. An initial

appraisal conducted under the authority of Sec. 216 of P.L. 91-611 was completed in February 1998, and suggested that raising Coyote Dam for increased water supply and flood control was economically feasible. This raising was included in the original project Congressional authorization, pending increased future water supply demand. The current interest in this raising comes from the Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control District. Congress has authorized \$100,000 for a Reconnaissance Study of this issue.